



FACE Program Fact Sheet

Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation

Department of Health and Family Services * Division of Public Health
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TWO FATALITIES RESULT FROM FAILURE TO USE OPERATOR RESTRAINT SYSTEMS WITH ROPS

BACKGROUND

The Wisconsin Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation (FACE) Program received reports of 91 fatal occupational injuries during 1999. Two of those incidents occurred when equipment operators failed to use operator restraint systems with ROPS-equipped vehicles.

This fact sheet describes the incidents and requests that occupational safety professionals and employers bring the following recommendations to the attention of equipment operators.

THE INCIDENTS

Incident #1

A 45-year-old supervisor for an excavation construction company was loading a bulldozer onto a flatbed trailer when it slid sideways off the trailer. The trailer was parked with the right wheels on the sloped road shoulder and the left wheels on the paved surface. Light rain was falling, and the trailer was wet. The trailer had two ramps that led from the ground to a platform. The victim drove up the ramps and part way onto the platform. The tracks of the machine slid sideways towards the ditch and off the trailer. He tried to jump out of the cab but was pinned beneath the cab structure when it landed on top of him. The bulldozer was equipped with a rollover protection structure (ROPS) and seatbelt, but apparently the victim was not using the seatbelt at the time of the incident.



Incident #2

An 18-year-old dairy farm worker died after the tractor he was driving overturned and he received crushing injuries from being tossed in the cab. He had almost completed raking a hay field and was turning around on a hillside with approximately 20° grade when the tractor overturned. The tractor was equipped with a rollover protection structure (ROPS) and seatbelt, but apparently the victim was not using the seatbelt at the time of the incident.



RECOMMENDATIONS

To prevent similar occurrences, tractor and equipment operators should:

- always use an operator restraint system while operating equipment equipped with rollover protective structures (ROPS).
- plan safe approaches when driving equipment on sloping terrain.
- arrange for an observer to provide verbal or signal directions when loading track equipment onto a trailer.

The Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services, in agreement with the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) conducts research on occupational fatalities. The Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation (FACE) Program focuses on identifying factors that increase the risk of work-related fatal injuries. The Wisconsin FACE Program helps in the development and use of improved safety measures for preventing fatal work injuries.

PLEASE POST

FACE information is produced and distributed to provide current, relevant education on methods to prevent severe work-related injuries.

If you have comments or questions, please call the FACE Project at 608/266-7298, or write:

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